The Mongoose Becomes a Snake

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The Mongoose Becomes a Snake

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Summary

Will's new identity? A damn *therapist,* thanks a lot, Hannibal. Now Will has the position of influence over his patients, and he finds that he *likes* it.

So does Hannibal.

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

Perhaps making Will's new identity a therapist had not been the best idea, Hannibal thought as he waited outside the office Will had set up for himself. Yes, the reversal of roles was incredibly intriguing, but it would appear that he underestimated how easily Will had adapted to his new role.

He had also underestimated how much *he* would enjoy it.

When Will first came downstairs in a freshly pressed suit and glasses, Hannibal nearly let the eggs burn as he immediately left the stovetop counter and to go over and kiss him. Will smiled into it, rolling his eyes.

"It's only plain glass in the frames," he said. "Is it really doing that much for you?"

Hannibal had chosen to not answer, instead giving him another kiss. "It adds a certain charm," he admits, making Will laugh before heading into the kitchen, and turned off the stove under the eggs.

"Over-*hard* this morning, I suppose," Will had smirked as he fiddled with the coffee machine and poured some into a thermos. He then took the thermos with him and kissed his husband on the cheek before he headed out the door, he had his first appointment that day. Hannibal was left to deal with inedible scrambled eggs and wandering thoughts.

That had been over five weeks ago, and Will came home most nights rolling his eyes over having to listen to some old lady talk about her dead cat that visited her in the night. Hannibal found it amusing and offered sympathy, but Will just waved it away with a smile.

"I know what you really only care about Leslie."

Leslie Madison was the much-younger wife of Professor Alexander Madison, one of "Professor Kore's" colleagues. Hannibal often complained about the man's insistence that Hannibal take over for some of his courses, it cut into his own scheduling. And it was clear (to Hannibal at least) that the man was earning far more money than an average professor. He soon learned the man had a side business in selling Adderall to anyone who had enough money. Hannibal's only interactions with Leslie were when she was hanging around Madison's offices waiting for him. Personally, he viewed the woman as a fragile, poor thing. She'd married him because she thought he loved her for more than her hourglass figure and was far too emotionally invested *(You have no room to talk, Will had rebuked)* in the man when it was clear he didn't feel the same. If she wasn't clutching her physical and metaphorical pearls, she was constantly counting the alternating purple and blue beads on the rosary she carried everywhere. Very Catholic, to the point that she would never grant Alexander a divorce even though he implied to her that he wanted one. Hannibal suspected that was the entire reason he had set her up with Will's practice.

However, Will had a different idea.

Hannibal didn't realize how well the therapy was going until one day he heard Leslie's high, breathy voice practically squealing as she loudly told off Alexander for missing their dinner

date that they had planned for weeks. He had never heard her speak above anything more than a whisper.

Will laughed as he kicked off his shoes by the door as Hannibal told him about the incident that day "Well, she's taking my advice, then. I told her to assert herself so that she is an asset in his life. Maybe I'm cut out for this therapist thing after all."

"Sound advice."

"Yeah," Will said thoughtfully, enjoying the glass of whiskey Hannibal handed to him. "I give her four weeks before she snaps."

That was why Hannibal was here, he was burning with curiosity on her progress. Alexander had been complaining recently that Leslie was getting 'snippy' at home. Hannibal thought it was an improvement over the previous doormat behavior.

He suddenly straightened up in his chair outside Will's office, standing up and coming out of his thoughts as a sniffling man left the office.

"Next week, Dr. Kore," he muttered as a goodbye. Hannibal paid him no mind as he approached the door, knocking gently.

"Come in," Will said, the slight Louisiana accent coming through clearly. Hannibal opened the door, and had to pause in the doorframe for a moment. Will looked up from where he was writing notes at his desk, glasses on the end of his nose. He smiled.

"Take a picture, it'll last longer," he joked. Hannibal smiled, finally entering the office and shutting the door behind him. He walked over as Will stood up from where he was sitting, taking the glasses off.

"I don't need a picture, I have you by my side forever," Hannibal said lowly, kissing him. Will smiled into it, and ran a hand through his hair afterwards. He sighed.

"God, this is boring. He didn't even want to say anything, just cry. How did you stand being a therapist all those years?"

"You make me sound ancient."

"If the shoe fits," Will grinned, causing Hannibal to give him a look. "Seriously, I'm bored."

"Usually I would influence them in order to see what would happen. Elderly patients putting me in their wills, some husbands and wives cheated on each other with mere persuasion, that sort of thing."

Will nodded, as though this were a perfectly normal conversation amongst spouses, and for them it *was*. "Ever get anyone to kill for you?" he asked, raising an eyebrow.

"Only once," Hannibal sighed wistfully. "And I found that accomplishment the pinnacle of my career and ended it on a high note."

“Whatever became of your patient?”

“I was far too enthralled with his potential, it led to my downfall,” Hannibal said with a completely straight face. Will rolled his eyes while he laughed.

“You can just say that you love me, you know. Don’t need to get so poetic all the time, darling.”

“Force of habit,” Hannibal smiled, pulling Will into a deep kiss, then purred out, *“-doctor.”*

He enjoyed watching Will’s eyes grow darker before he let out a chuckle. *“Damn,* now I get why you like it when I call you that,” he remarked as Hannibal backs him up against the desk and started kissing down his neck. He was about to let Hannibal have his way when there were three sudden knocks on the door.

“Dr. Kore, are you in?” Leslie’s quivering voice sounded through the door. Will sighed, pushing Hannibal back and grabbing his glasses.

“Yes, just a moment, Leslie,” he said in a polite voice, then winked at Hannibal before saying softly, “I’ll be home for dinner, darling, I promise. I’ve got a patient to attend to now.”

He pushed him towards the door, Hannibal narrowed his eyes. “I never should have made you a doctor.”

“What, am I not satisfying your curiosity enough?” Will smirked, hand on the doorknob. “I’ll do that tonight, then. Goodbye, *professor,* don't want you late for class, now.”

Hannibal pressed a kiss to his cheek as Will opened the door, and nodded graciously to Leslie as he left. She quickly scurried into the office, immediately sitting down on the couch and twisting her rosary beads around her French-manicured nails.

“I-I’m sorry, I know my appointment is for Thursday, but-”

“It’s alright,” Will soothed, sitting down behind his desk. He found that every day he enjoyed the work more and more. After so many years of never being able to be control of his own mind, he found the ability to have control over other's perceptions intoxicating. Not *necessarily* maliciously, he honestly did feel bad for Leslie. She truly thought Alexander loved her, that was a dangerous thing to play with. You can never truly hate someone without loving them first, and Will was counting on that fact. “What made you come in today, Leslie?”

She was jumpy, twitchy. Nervous about something as she obsessively counted the rosary beads one by one. Exactly fifty-nine beads. It calmed her, this incessant counting.

“I had a dream last night,” she said hesitantly. “I was lying in our bed, *relaxing* for once, almost as though I were floating. Then these - these big, strong hands wrap around my neck, squeezing hard. I can’t breathe, everything is spinning and I’m screaming - and then I woke up, still screaming. Alexander, he, uh, told me to be quiet, to go back to sleep. I couldn’t.”

She took a deep breath and started counting the beads again. Will waited until she reached fifty-nine, and then she spoke again.

“I - I don’t know if Alexander loves me anymore,” she whispers. “I’ve tried to be everything he wants, but - but what if it isn’t enough?”

“Then perhaps he isn’t meant for you.”

“But he said that he *loved* me,” she said softly. “You - you *can't* say ‘I love you’ so many times and *mean* it and then - then just take it *back.* He’s getting - aggressive, though. I don’t know what to do.”

Will considered what to say, when she adds, almost hurriedly, “And - well, I’m worried that he doesn’t like me coming here to see you. He questions when I’m not home on time, when we go overtime.”

Well. That’s a new development. Will thinks over any reason why Alexander wouldn’t want her to go to her appointments when it hits him. She’s upped to three two-hour sessions a week. The man’s jealous. Will pushes that thought aside and instead clasps his hands together and leans forward, concern etched across his features.

“I see. Leslie, I’d like to do a little mental exercise, can we do that?” Leslie nodded, and Will continued. “Close your eyes. Don’t squeeze them shut, let them close naturally. Relax, now. Everything is alright.”

He watched as her eyes closed, as her shoulders slumped and her breathing became normal. He smiled. “Now, I want you to picture your perfect future with Alexander. Everything exactly as you’ve ever dreamed.”

He lets her picture it, a smile tugging at her lips. Then he continues. “Now I want you to picture you in the here and now, in the present. Happy, in a life without Alexander.”

He’s pleased to see that her smile is much wider with that mental image. “Perfect, you’re doing very well, Leslie. Open your eyes now.”

She opened her eyes and Will smile back at her. “Now tell me, Leslie: which outcome would be easier to achieve: happiness in the future with Alexander, or you in the present and content with your life without him?”

Leslie thinks for a full five minutes, counting all of her beads four times. Two hundred and thirty-six, Will counted along with her mentally. Finally, she bit her lip and looked up.

“Without him,” she whispered, and Will can feel a part of her breaking loose, like a glacier melting. His smile grows wider and he nods.

“Excellent, Leslie. Now, let’s discuss how you can accomplish that.”

Hannibal decided that he was fine with an office that didn't lock as long as every single person knocked. Alexander Madison did not knock, and if Hannibal was not a person who anticipated the moves of everyone around him, he would have flinched and dropped his fork as the man burst into his office.

"The hell kind of practice is your husband running?" he demanded, crossing his arms and leaning against the doorframe as though he expected an answer. Hannibal simply kept chewing a bite of the rude man who had tried to rip off potential buyers in the real-estate market in a plum-ginger cause, and after he finished, he looked up at the pissed-off man in his door.

"What do you mean, Alexander? Oh, before I forget, I wanted to invite you and Leslie over for dinner tomorrow evening."

"Absolutely not," Alexander snapped. "You said that your husband had a habit of being *persuasive* in order to get the desired result of the therapy."

"Forgive me," Hannibal said politely, trying to keep the ice out of his tone. "But I thought you had Leslie put in therapy for her *own* benefit, not yours."

Alexander rolled his eyes, as though Hannibal were an idiot for even thinking that. "Why would I do that? And let me tell you something, Julius: I'd keep an eye on how faithful your husband is. You don't him to fall victim to the old psychiatrist/patient romance, do you?"

Somehow Hannibal kept a straight face at that. "Of course not."

"Good. And regretfully, we won't be accepting your invitation. I don't want her to spend any more time with him."

Hannibal understood, and let out the eyeroll he'd been holding as soon Alexander left the room. He finished lunch and continued on with his day, though he was ready to go home and discuss this new development, but he had to stay later than usual because of meetings and grading some essays. On the way home, he planned dinner in his mind and was pleasantly surprised to smell something cooking when he arrived home.

"Hope you don't mind, but I used the rest of the chorizo and threw it in for some soup," Will smiled, offering a glass of rosé as Hannibal entered the kitchen. "I think I remember something about blush wines pairing well with spice."

"So you do listen to me on more than one occasion," Hannibal remarked, reaching over with his free hand to lift the lid on the pot bubbling on the stove. Will swatted it away, and then set the lid down on the countertop.

"Absolutely not, it's just a simple thing for dinner, no adding some exotic fruit juice or random organ parts," Will scolded lightly, stirring the dish carefully before putting the lid back on. He wandered over to the living room, flipping through their record collection. "Care for some music?"

“The Vivaldi, if you please,” Hannibal said as he followed his husband into the living room. “Alexander rejected the dinner invitation.”

“Not surprised. Does he think his wife is having a torrid affair with her therapist?” Will asked, grinning like he thought he was so clever as he put in the record, and sweet violin notes played in the air. Hannibal raised an eyebrow.

“You’re aware?”

Will surged, taking a sip from his glass, “Psychic driving, there’s something to it, after all.”

“What a cunning boy you are,” Hannibal smiled, completely in awe of his husband before him. Such a change from the shy, nervous man afraid of his own mind, of the darkness that swirled within. God, that was a different time, a different man. Looking at him now, how in *control* he was, how it was so easy for him to relax on the couch, fingers twirling in time to the music with one hand as he held his glass in the other. Hannibal sat down beside him, and Will took his hand in his own and smiled as he closed his eyes and listened to the music. And they stayed like that for a while, simply letting the music wash over them.

Hannibal had never thought, never *dreamed* of sharing these sorts of moments together. He’d never forget that evening a few months after they fell off the cliff. He was standing out on their porch, watching the sunset and pondering where Will would go now that he had recovered. He had no reason to stay, and yet, Hannibal knew he had no reason to go back, either. But then Will came out onto the porch, and stood beside him. He reached out and took Hannibal’s hand, interlacing their fingers.

“*It’s beautiful,”* was all he had said on the porch, echoing the cliff, and it was all he needed to say before Hannibal broke. Will had laughed softly, wiping a tear out of his eye before leaning in and kissing him. It had been overwhelming.

Hannibal was brought back to the present by Will leaning his head on his shoulder, looking peaceful, content. *Happy.* “I find myself in a dilemma,” he remarked.

“What, Will?”

“The soup is going to boil over any second,” he sighed. “But I really don’t want to get up.”

“I will-”

“No, I don’t want you to get up, either.”

“A dilemma, indeed,” Hannibal smiled. “But there will be less to clean if the pot is stopped before it spills over. And I can focus on dessert.”

“What kind of dessert?”

“Strawberries, with hand-whipped cream and-”

“That’s all I need,” Will smirked, rubbing his thumb across Hannibal’s wedding band before standing up. “Now let’s have some soup.”

The soup was delicious, the chorizo and the cayenne spicy and mealy while the vegetables added a wholesome flavor to the dish. Hannibal was impressed and he told Will so, causing him to blush and duck his head slightly, it was a lovely sight. After they had finished their dinner, Will put the leftovers away and leaned against the countertop as Hannibal sliced strawberries into perfect halves. Hannibal can't help but ask, "How is Leslie doing with her therapy?"

"She's like a bowstring," Will answered, taking a strawberry half and chewing it thoughtfully. "Wound tight enough to either snap or play a sweet song." He cringed slightly. "God, now I'm talking like you. You're a terrible influence, in so many ways."

"I suppose I am," Hannibal smiled, picking up another strawberry and offering it to Will. Will got a devious look in his eyes and leaned forward, accepting the fruit with his teeth.

"Delicious," he smirked, licking the juice off of his fingers.

Hannibal decided that the affairs of Will's patients were suddenly far less important than the little strawberry seed stuck in the corner of Will's lips, and he nearly cut his finger off when Will moved closer and kissed behind his ear as he wrapped His arms around his waist.

"Yeah, we can just move this upstairs, darling," he purred. "Bring the strawberries."

Will's office door was flung open, and it would have startled Will if he wasn't engrossed with a hidden crossword puzzle. *Animal that engages in the consumption of its own species*. He was pondering whether to go with an *'H'* or a *'C'* before *'annibal'* when he looked up. Alexander Madison was glaring at him from his doorway.

"Alexander, what a surprise," he drawls, looking far too polite in order to draw suspicions. "Care to make an appointment?"

The man narrowed his eyes. "I'm onto you, Kore."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Don't play dumb and bat your eyes at me, what does my wife talk about with you?" he demanded. Will shook his head and smiled.

"I'm afraid I can't tell you that, Alexander. Doctor-patient confidentiality is a rule I hold in high regard."

"You - you *asshole-"*

"Don't be rude to me," Will said lowly, the smile clearly fake now. "I wouldn't advise that. But you *do* look tense, would you care to start your own series of appointments?"

“Now you listen to *me,”* Alexander galred, and Will pretended to look unnerved. The man in the doorway seemed to buy it. “I don’t know what kind of therapy you practice, but Leslie has been acting *worse* since she came to see you.”

“In what ways, Alexander?”

“She’s - she’s louder, even more annoying than usual. *Assertive.* Counts her damn rosary beads at least once every fifteen minutes.”

“Perhaps she is asking the Lord for strength to continue with her marriage to you,” Will smiled, finally setting his pen down and leaning forward on his desk, hands clasped together. “It’s the only thing that brings her peace anymore, as *you* are not supportive enough for her.”

“Well I want to leave her,” he snapped.

Will clucked his tongue as he removed his glasses, biting gently on the temple of his glasses, smirking around it as he shook his head. “You swore 'til death do you part, did you not? She intends to hold you to that.”

Will laughed as the door slammed shut as Alexander left in a huff. He picked his pen back up again, muttering, “I warned you.”

The next time Leslie came in, she counted the beads on her rosary four times before she said anything.

“I’m *afraid,”* she whispered. Will offered a caring look, and a box of tissues. She waved it away. “I went to confession today.”

“And do you feel cleansed of your sins?”

“I - I didn't go to be cleansed of my *previous* sins,” she said softly, but now there was a glistening level of steel beneath her words. It was newly developed, newly brought out, and Will felt proud. “I went to to receive forgiveness for what I’m *going* to do.”

“And what are you going to do, Leslie?” Will asked. Leslie’s knuckles turned white from how tightly she clutched her rosary. She took a deep breath.

“Alexander slapped me last night. Hard,” she said. There was no emotion behind her words, only coldness. “He promised he would *never* lay a hand on me. He promised that he would love me *forever.* He broke *both* of those promises.”

“Do *you* still love him?” Will asked. She blinked as she stared ahead, looking lost in her own mind.

“He said that he was going to leave me,” she croaked.

Will was a little firmer this time. “That’s not what I asked you, Leslie. Do *you* still love him?”

“I - I don't know,” she breathes out, and Will has gone through a breakdown or two, he knows the signs of one. Leslie is right on the precipice of one. All she needs is one little *push.*

“Leslie,” he says calmly, suddenly understanding *exactly* how Hannibal must have felt when he was pushing *him* all those years ago. And he shouldn’t be enjoying this, but he is, and he also shouldn't be surprised that it doesn’t bother him how much he *enjoys* this. “Leslie. *What* are you planning to do?”

“He wants to hurt you, he’s paranoid,” she spits out, tapping her nails on a bead worn down by months of tapping. “He thinks this is an affair, I’m scared, he’s trying to cut out every*one* and every*thing* out of my life, except for him. But - but he wants to leave me, I just - I don’t *understand.”*

“It means that he may not love you-” Will knows that hit a very severe nerve by her wincing, but he keeps pressing “-but in his mind, you *belong* to him. Do you want that for yourself, Leslie?”

She shakily got to her feet, and started pacing about the office. “N - *no.* No, I don’t.”

“Then I suggest that you either remove your husband from your life, or you leave,” Will declares. “It is up to you to make your choice, Leslie. Either way, you will be granting yourself agency.”

Leslie bit her lip again, then nodded. “That’s why I went for forgiveness for my yet-to-come sins. I - I’m going to - well, you don’t - you don’t need to know - b-but - but thank you so much for your advice, and I - I think this will be our last session for a while. I feel...sure of myself, I haven’t felt like that in years. I’ve never felt...*understood* before, thank you so much, doctor.”

“It’s my specialty,” Will smiled, standing and offering a hand. “And I wish you all the best, Leslie.”

She nods, and shakes his hand with a surprisingly firm grip. “Be careful,” she whispers. “Alexander, he’s told me that he wants to-”

“Don’t worry about me,” Will soothes. “I’ll be fine.”

Leslie nods, whispering ‘thank you’ again before she leaves.

Will’s last appointment of the day ran late, and he was just thinking that Hannibal was going to be cranky that he was late for dinner. He had just finished packing his briefcase when the door to his office swung open, and two men stepped in. It was obvious they had malicious intentions.

“Dr. Kore?” one asked, his hand tightening around the knife in his hand.

“In the flesh,” Will smiles. This is a slight annoyance, but he hasn’t been hunting in over two weeks, and he’s been getting...*antsy.* “Can I help you gentlemen?”

“Please, come with us,” the man holding the knife grumbles, making his way closer. Will smiles at the army knife held in a sloppily grip. God, it was going to be over so *soon,* too bad…

“Unfortunately, I have dinner plans,” Will says politely. And the second the man closest to him steps behind the desk, Will grabs his ebony-black hunting knife from inside the open briefcase and has the man’s jugular vein opened and all over the rug in a matter of ten seconds. Taking advantage of the split-second shock in his partner's face, Will easily leaps over his desk and slams the other man to the ground, the knife pressed to his throat. “Now, *I* have a question, and if you answer me without being cryptic, I might not kill you.”

The man sputters, tries to escape but Will just drags the knife lightly over his throat, feeling the blood ooze out onto his fingers. “I’m waiting.”

“Fine! Fine! Some - some guy named Madison, said you were pissing him off, said that he wanted you de-”

Will slams his head into the floor and knocks him out cold. He takes a deep breath and then sits back on his heels, wiping what he thinks is sweat off of his face. It turned out to be blood, and he just smears it across his face further. Then he stands up, heads back to desk and shoves the corpse aside, and pulls out his cell phone.

“Will?” Hannibal answers on the first ring, because of *course* he does. Will smiles as he rolls his eyes. “Are you alright?”

“Darling, can you come over and pick me up from the office?”

“Will, are you alright, what’s happened?”

“I had a little...*accident*...at work, darling. Could you bring the car, a clean shirt, and...oh, and that spare rug you’ve been looking to get rid of, *please?”* He adds a special purr on the “please,” and he knows he’s got Hannibal wrapped around his little finger.

“...Ten minutes,” Hannibal says into the phone, and Will thanks him and hangs up. He debates cleaning the blood off of him, but then decides the sight of him with blood spatters across his face would be a nice surprise.

Hannibal rolls his eyes as he carries up a shag rug, and a clean blue shirt up the back stairs, glad that Will is only one floor above street level. But he wasn’t quite prepared for the sight of Will in an undone white linen shirt, tie loose, blood smeared across his face as he pressed two fingers into the neck of an unconscious man on the ground. God, he looks delicious, and

Hannibal can't resist dropping everything in his arms in favor of pulling him into his arms for a deep kiss, licking the blood splatter from his lips. Will smirks as he feels Hannibal slide his hand up under his shirt.

"Hannibal," he scolds lightly, "There are two bodies in my office, I need to get rid of them before someone suspects something. Can you roll the rug out over the stains, and - *Hannibal."*

"Mmmm," Hannibal hums, kissing behind Will's ear and pulling him even closer. "Absolutely *divine."*

God, he's going to start waxing poetic about the bridge of his nose or something if he doesn't stop this now. He gently pushes Hannibal back.

"Not *now,* Hannibal, can you wait twenty minutes to get home?"

Hannibal's look turns sour, but Will can still see the fondness in his eyes. "Very well."

Will forces Hannibal to turn around while he changes into a clean shirt, and then they roll out the new rug and take away the old one. Hannibal puts the corpse into the trunk of the car, and then heads back upstairs as Will looks over the other man, who stirs awake and flinches at the sight of Will.

"I told you the truth! Don't kill me," he pleads, scooting back on the floor, desperately trying not to look into Will's dark, amused expression.

"Oh, *I* won't kill you," he says gently, luring him a false sense of security. "But I cannot say the same for my husband."

At that, the terrified man turns around and looks right into Hannibal's eyes, who smiles down at him before moving quicker than lightning, and wraps his hands around his neck and pulls hard, snapping his neck in a clean break. Will pouts a little.

"Aw, I wanted to take that one home, we could have taken our time, drawn it out for *hours."*

Hannibal steps over the corpse to kiss Will again. It's gentle this time, and when he pulls away he looks concerned, brushing the hair out of his eyes.

"Did they hurt you, love?"

"No, Hannibal, I'm fine, I promise. Alexander obviously thought that he could hire some low-grade thugs to take out a *poor, weak* therapist," Will grins. "Probably some of the same guys who do his Adderall runs - *Hannibal,"* he sighs, as Hannibal visibly examines him for any sign of injury, "I'm fine, darling."

"You lied the last time and I had to patch you up in the backseat of the Bentley."

"That was one time, and it was a scratch."

"A lot of blood for a mere scratch."

Will sighs, but smiles anyway, kissing Hannibal gently on the cheek. “Hannibal. I promise you I am alright. I would never let anyone besides you have the honor of killing me, darling. I will let you feed me in bed if that’s what will make you feel better, but I can assure you that I’m not hurt. Okay?”

“...Alright,” Hannibal smiles back, allowing himself one more kiss to Will’s nose. “Help me carry him out.”

Will slept late the next morning, the adrenaline from the kills and the long night in bed wore him out completely. He woke to Hannibal gently rubbing his shoulder, and he groaned, “Hannibal, I thought we were staying bed today, what-”

“Will. There is a detective downstairs.”

Will immediately sat straight up so fast that he cracked skulls with Hannibal and tried to hurriedly get out of bed and dres. “Jesus fucking Christ, go deal with him, I’ll get the passports and the emergency suitcases and the - why the *fuck* are you just sitting there laughing?”

Hannibal made himself stop laughing to say calmly, “Will, he's here to see 'Dr. Kore,' not *us.”*

Will fell back onto the bed, all of his exhaustion and his adrenaline hitting at once, he dragged his hand across his face. “What the *fuck* - next time, open with *that* so I don’t have a heart attack.”

“My *deepest* apologies.”

“Save any sort of innuendo for later,” Will sighed, getting back up and dressing in a suit, attempting to comb his curls out before giving up and making his way downstairs. He slapped on a pleasant smile and shook the detective's hand. There was a breakfast casserole on the plate in front of him, Will suppressed an eyeroll. Hannibal never could help himself. “Rather early on a Saturday for you to be out, detective. Do you care for some coffee?”

“Oh, your husband already poured some, even gave me some breakfast,” the detective said, getting up and moving to the living room. “Excellent cook you have there, doctor. But to business, I’m Detective Dean Grayson, and I’d like to discuss one of your patients, Leslie Madison.”

“Has something happened to her?” Will asked, glad that he’d perfected the fake sympathy early in his life. The detective let out a short laugh.

“No, not exactly.” And then he launched into the story: apparently, Leslie returned home after her last therapy session to a pissed-off Alexander, and they had an enormous fight, one where the picture frames were broken and holes were punched into the walls. When the police

arrived (Leslie herself had called them), they found handprints and bruising on her neck. But they were more concerned with *where* they found her.

She was lying on the bed she shared with her husband at her side, clasping her Bible in her arms and muttering Hail Marys over and over. Her husband was dead beside her, a rosary with purple and blue beads wrapped around his neck, but autopsy had proved that the choking only subdued him at the time, she had pressed a pillow over his face and suffocated him.

“My vows are null and void,” was the only response the police could get out of her, as she touched her bruising. “He hurt me, *promised* he loved me, he *hurt* me…”

Will wished he could keep the pictures of the crime scene, there was beauty in the rawness of the passion of the crime. It was better than a damn Botticelli, the blasphemy of the crime done by such a devout follower.

He knew all she needed was a push.

“Well, I’m just *horrified,”* Will said, feigning surprised. “I - I knew she wasn’t very stable, but I *never* thought she would do something like *this.* She said that he was -” he whispers to the detective, *“ - rather abusive.* But it was only this week that she would admit to herself that he was hurting her. But you see, everyone has their breaking point, impossible to predict. She must have broke last night.”

“Do you think she should be committed?”

“Personally, I think she simply stopped putting up with the abuse and just snapped, but with some extra therapy and a little rehabilitation, I don’t think that she is a danger to society. She’s very unlikely to do it again.”

For now.

Detective Grayson nodded, getting up from the couch. “Thank you for your insight, doctor. Appreciate it. You and your husband have a nice morning, now.” He nods to Hannibal, who was listening from the kitchen, and takes his leave. Will immediately locks the door behind him and leans against it, sighing in relief.

“I wasn’t ready to be 'Dr. Kore' this early,” he yawned, and then he stood back up, blinking to re-center himself and then heading towards the stairs. “Though I love a good shot of blasphemy and murder with my morning coffee.”

“I shall keep that in mind.”

“Hannibal, please don’t crucify someone and put them in our living room, we don’t need to speed up our inevitable descent into hell,” Will sighed, leaning against the staircase. The angle let the suit pull at all the right places and Will yawned again, unaware of how *delicious* he looked.

“‘M going back to bed,” he murmured, heading up the stairs. He got back up to the bedroom, stripping out of his cuit and climbing back into the sheets. He was always exhausted a night after a murder, because the adrenaline made the sex that much better, that much more stamina for them both. He laughed a little to himself as he remembered the first time they got into bed together. It had been far too much for them emotionally, he’s still amazed they both didn’t pass out during the actual act. Hannibal had cried, Will was sure he had gone blind, and they definitely feel asleep right after. It was horrible.

They made up for it the next morning, though. Multiple times.

The closest I will ever come to consuming you, Will.

Please don’t mix cannibalism with sex puns after I have an orgasm, Hannibal.

(He never stopped, and Will found that after a while he didn’t really care.)

Will was ready to fall asleep when he felt Hannibal’s warm arms wrap around his waist and pull him closer, and he buried his face in his neck.

“Impressive work, Will.”

“Wasn’t that difficult,” Will murmured, groaning as Hannibal’s hand reach around and stroked the scar on Will’s stomach. “Mmm, yeah, don't stop.”

“I won’t...*doctor.”*

“Hell, this is going to get complicated, *professor.”*

“...”

“Fuck, you like that, of course you do,” Will huffs out, laughing slightly and turning around into Hannibal's arms, giving him a half-hearted glare. “But do me a favor, darling?”

“Anything in the world, Will.”

“Stop talking.” And then he kissed him hard enough that Hannibal decided that words would never be enough to describe Will anyway, so he just kissed back.

It was a *very* good morning.

End Notes

One method of manipulation is constantly referring to the person you are speaking to by name. Fun psychiatry fact!

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